Problems of sugarcane growers

2603. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any formula has been evolved to help the sugarcane growers out of the crisis faced by them; and

(b) the number of sugarcane growers suffering alongwith the latest figures of accumulated arrears of cane dues and other parameters of the crisis?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) and (b) Government has constituted an Inter-Ministerial Group to address the problems of the sugar industry.

The amount of cane price dues payable by sugar mills to sugarcane farmers for the current sugar season is about Rs. 3212 crores as on 15.6.2003.

Sale of commodities in hotels at M.R.P.

2604. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Star category hotels and other fast food joints are not charging the customers according to Consumer Affairs Packaged Commodities Rules, 1997 on various items like cold drinks and drinking water;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) what action Government have proposed against the owners of these hotels/fast food joints;

(d) whether it is also a fact that according to the above rules, all the items sold at the hotels are sold at printed Maximum Retail Price (MRP); and

(e) if so, how many five star hotels are not selling those commodities at MRP and the action taken against them by Government?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to the letter received from the Hotel and Restaurant Association of India, the Star hotels and Food Joints have to sell packaged items of cold drinks and drinking water at a premium to make up for the added services they render like air conditioning, a proper ambience, comfortable sitting, uniformed waiters, tables with linen, chairs, glasses, cutlery etc.

(c) According to information available, action has been initiated against 1461 hotels/ food joints by the State enforcement authorities of Legal Metrology since January, 2002 for selling packaged commodities at price higher than MRP.

(d) The Standards of Weights and Measures (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 1977 provide that no retail dealer or other person including manufacturer/packer/wholesale dealer shall sell a packaged commodity at a price exceeding the retail sale price declared on the package.

(e) According to the information available, cases were registered against 7 five star hotels for selling the packaged commodities at price exceeding MRP declared on their packages. The cases have been compounded with fines ranging from Rs. 3000 to Rs. 19000/-

Recommendations made by "High level Committee on long-term grain policy"

2605. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH :Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) the status report of implementation by Government as on date, with regard to various recommendations and proposals as made through a report by the "High level Committee on long-term grain policy", July 2002; and

(b) what remedial measures are being taken by Government towards greater production and proper security of Food Distribution in view of the report having shown at all India level, much decrease in food production, area of cultivation and yield per hectare from 1999 which is a warning signal for a rapid negative growth of production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA : (a) Government has examined the major recommendations